A moſt pleaſant and merie nevv Comedie,

Intituled,

A Knacke to knowe a Knaue.

Newlie ſet foorth, as it hath ſundrie tymes bene played by ED. ALLEN and his Companie.

VVith KEMPS applauded Merrimentes of the men of Goteham, in receiuing the King into Goteham.

Imprinted at London by Richard Iones, dwelling at the ſigne of the Roſe and Crowne, nere Holborne bridge. 1594.

A merie Knacke to knowe a Knaue,

Enter King Edgar, bishop Dunston, and Perin a courtier.

King. DVnston, how highlie are we bound to praise
The Eternall God that still prouides for vs,
And giues vs leaue to rule in this our land,
Lyke wise Vaspasian, Romes rich Emperour:
Suppressing sinne, that daylie raignes in vs:
First, murther we rewarde with present death,
And those that doe commit fellonious crimes,
Our lawes of England doe awarde them death:
And hee that doeth dispoyle a Virgins chastitie,
Must lykewise suffer death by lawes decree,
And that decree is irreuocable.
Then as I am Gods Vicegerent here on earth,
By Gods appointment heere to raigne and rule,
So must I seeke to cut abuses downe,
That lyke to Hydras heades, daylie growes vp one in ano-
And therein makes the land infectious. (thers place,
Which if with good regard we looke not to,
We shall, lyke Sodom, feele that fierie doome,
That God in Iustice did inflict on them.

Dunston. Your Graces care herein I much commend,
And England hath iust cause to praise the Lorde,
That sent so good a King to gouerne them,
Your lyfe may be a Lanterne to the state,
By perfect signe of humilitie.
Howe blest had Sodome bene in sight of God,
If they had had so kinde a Gouernour,
They had then vndoubtedlie escapt that doome,

That God in iuſtice did inflict on them:
Then England kneele vpon thy hartie knee,
And praiſe that God, that ſo prounes for thee.
And vertuous Prince, thou Salomon of our age,
Whoſe yeares I hope ſhall double Neſtors raigne,
And bring a thouſand profits to the land:
My ſelfe (dread Prince) in token of my loue,
And dutifull obedience to your Grace,
Will ſtudie daylie, as my dutie willes,
To roote ſinnes from the flouriſhing common wealth.
That Fame in euery angle of the world,
May ſound due praiſe of Englands vertuous King.
King. Dunſton. liue thou, and counſell ſtill the king,
To maintaine Iuſtice, were it on himſelf,
Rather than ſoothing him in his abuſe,
To ſee ſubuerſion of his common wealth.
I tell thee Dunſton, thou haſt pleaſed the King,
And prooued thy ſelfe a vertuous counſellour:
Thy counſell is to me as North ſtars light,
That guides the Sayler to his wiſhed port:
For by that ſtarre he is ſo comforted,
That he ſailes daungerleſſe on daungerous ſeas,
And in his deepeſt ſadnes comforts him:
So Dunſtons knowledge is that ſtarre of ioy,
That will with helpe conduct me to my happineſſe.
Honeſty. And yet thou art not happy Edgar,
Becauſe that ſinnes, lyke ſwarmes, remaine in thee.
King. Why, tis impoſſible, for I haue ſtudied ſtill,
To root abuſes from the common wealth,
That may infect the king or communaltie.
Therefore, baſe Peaſant, wilfull as thou art,
I tell thee troth, thou haſt diſpleaſd the King.
Honeſty. Nay, the King hath diſpleaſed himſelfe,
In truſting euery one that ſpeaks him faire:
For through faire words, Kings manie tymes are faine
To countenance Knaues by their authoritie:

I will not say your Grace doeth so.

Perin. No sir, you were not best.

Honest. Why, if I should, I might make good my word,
And fynd a Knaue, I feare, before I part.

King. Why, what art thou?

Honesty. Mary I goe plaine, and my name is Honesty,
A friend to your Grace, but a foe to Flatterers,
And one that hath a Knacke to know a Knaue. (giuen you,

Perin. As how sir, by art, or by some foolish gift God hath
You are some Vlissitian, or skild in Vilognomy, or in palmestry
For I am sure, you can neuer do it by Astronomie,
Because there are no starres to knowe a knaue. (cost,

Hon. True, but many an honest man knowes a knaue to his
And is neither Vlisitiã, Vilognomer, palmester, nor astronomer
But a plaine man of the country, lyke me,
That knowes a knaue, if he doe but see his cap.

Per. That wer prettie Ifaith, to see Honesty know a knaue
Tis more than I can do with al the skil I haue: (by his cap,
But tel me I pray thee, how I should know a knaue.

Hon. I beleeue you wel, for offenders neuer bewray their
Til the Law fynd them, and punish them: (offences
But you would faine tell how to know a knaue,
Then thus, the first man you meet in the morning,
If he salute you, drawe neere him,
And smell to his hat, and after smell to your owne,
And my cap to a noble, if his smel lyke yours, he is a knaue,
I thinke I spoke with you now.

Perin. Base Villain, were it not that the Kinges presence
doth priuilege thy presũptiõ, I wold teach you to iest with your
Ki. Forbear, honesty, thou art a good plain fellow, (fellows
And I cõmend thy wit, that hast such waies to know a knaue.

Hon. Honesty is plaine my Lord, but no good fellow,
For good fellowes be purse-takers now a daies:
And there be so manie of such good fellowes,
That Honesty may walke the streetes without company,
Not that there wants company, but honest company I mean,
And yet Honesty can clap a knaue on the shoulder for al his
brauerie.

Perin, Why (base companion) meane you me?
Honesty. Not base (sir) because I was truelie begotten,
For Honesty may be suspected, but neuer detected:
But you think I had a bayliefe to my father as you had,
And that my mother could returne a writ of error,
As yours did, when such a Gallant as you were gotten.
King. Beleeue me, Perin, he hath toucht you now,
And I perceiue, though Honesty be simple,
Yet manie tymes he speakes trueth. (not lie:
Honesty. True, if it please your Grace, for honest men wil
But if your Grace vouchsafe to giue me leaue,
You shall see me finde more knaues than one.
If my cunning faile me not, or els say Honesty had no honesty
Ki. But tel me, Dunston, how thinkest thou of this motion?
Were it not good thinkest thou we gaue him leaue
To stifle such Catterpillers as corrupt the common welth:
For manie tymes such simple men as he,
Bewray much matter in simplicitie:
Then tell me Dunston, what thinkest thou of his motion?
Dunst. If it please your Grace to thinke it good,
Dunston will say as once Hefestion did,
When Alexander wan rich Macedone,
That what so ere the King himselfe thought meete,
He would in dutifull obedience yeeld vnto:
And so saith Dunston to your Maiestie.
For many times such simple men bring that to passe,
That wiser heads cannot attaine vnto,
For doubtlesse he hath some deuice in hand,
Whereby to fynde such subtle knauerie.
King. Well, Dunston, then as thou hast counseld me,
I will for once make proofe of Honesty: sirra, come hither,
In hope you wil, as your profession is,
In honest sort to fynde deceiuers out:
And fynding them, to giue vs notice straight,
That we may punish them for their amisse:
We giue thee leane to worke what means thou maist,

So it be not preiudice to the state nor vs.

Honesty. My gratious Lord, if Honestie offend,
In anie thing that he hath promised,
And doe not as your Grace hath giuen in charge,
Stifle such Caterpillers as corrupt the state.
Let Honestie receiue such punishment,
As he deserues that leazes to the king. (thee first,

King. Honesty it is ynough, but tel me now what moued
To vndertake this talke to visit vs, speak truth, dessemble not:

Honest. If I shuld tel your Grace twold make you laugh
To heare how Honesty was entertainde,
Poore, lame and blinde when I came once athore,
Lord, how they came in flocks to visit me,
The shepheard with his hooke, and Thrasher with his flaile,
The very pedler with his dog, and the tinker with his male.
Then comes a souldier counterfeit, & with him was his Jug,
And Wil the whipper of the dogs had got a bounsing trug:
And coging Dick was in the crue, that swore he cam frō Frāce
He swore that in the Kings defence, he lost his arm by chance,
And yet in conscience, if I were put to sweare,
I would be bound to lay a pound, the knaue was neuer there,
And hapning mongst this companie by chance one day,
I had no sooner namde my name, but they ran all away,
But now I will to my talke, and leaue your Grace,
And so I take my conge of your Maiestie.

King. Honestie, farewel, and looke vnto your charge.

Perin. My gratious Lord, if I might not offend,
I would intreat a fauour at your hand,
Tis so, I heard of late, my gratious Lord,
That my kinde father lay at poynt of death,
And if (my Lord) I should not visite him,
The world (I feare) would fynd great fault with me.

King. May, Perin, if your businesse bee of waight,
We are content to giue you leaue to goe:
Prouided this, that you returne againe,
When you haue seene your Father and your friends.

Perin. My gratious Lord, I will not stay there long.
Only but see my father and returne againe.
Till when my gratious Lord, I take my leaue.
Kin. Perin farewel, and tel me Dunston, now we are alone,
What doest thou thinke of beauteous Alfrida,
For she is reported to be be passing faire:
They say she hath a white pit in hir chin,
That makes her looke lyke to the Queene of loue,
When she was dalying with Endymion:
Beleeue me Dunston, if she be so faire,
She will serue our turne to make a Concubine,
Me thinks tis good some tyme to haue a loue
To sport withall, and passe away the tyme.
Dun. I, my good Lord, Dunston could wel allow of it,
If so your Grace would marrie Alfrida.
King. What, wouldst thou haue me marie her I neuer saw
Then men would say I doted on a wench:
But Dunston, I haue found a policie,
Which must indeed be followed to the full:

Enter Ethenwald.

Earle Ethenwald, welcome, I thought to send for you,
You must goe doe a message for vs now,
Tis nothing but to woo a Wench, which you can doe:
You must not woo her for your selfe but me.
Tell her, I sit and pine lyke Tantalus:
And if you can, straine foorth a teare for me,
Tell her, she shall be honoured in my Loue,
And beare a childe that one day may be King:
Bid her not stand on tearmes, but send me word,
Whether she be resolued to loue me, yea or no.
If she say no, tell her I can enforce her Loue:
Or tis no matter though you leaue that out,
And tell her this, we heare she is as wyse,
As eloquent and ful of Oratory, as Thaly was, daughter of Iupiter
Whose speaches were so pleasing mong the Greeks
That she was tearmde a second Socrates.

For

For some report, women loue to be praisd,
Then in my cause I pray thee loue thou Alfrida.
Ethen. My gratious Lord, and Ethenwald shall not faile
To shew his humble dutie to your Maiestie:
I will, my Lord, woe her in your behalfe,
Plead loue for you, and straine a sigh to show your passions,
I will say she is fayrer than the Dolphins eie,
At whome amazde, the night stars stand and gaze,
Then will I praise her chin, and cheeke, and pretty hand,
Long made lyke Venus, when she vsde the harp,
When Mars was reueling in loues high house.
Besides, my Lord, I will say she hath a pace,
Much like to Iuno in Idea vale,
When Argus watcht the Heifer on the mount:
These words, my Lord, will make her loue, I am sure,
If these will not my Lord, I haue better far.
King. May, this is well, now Ethenwald be gone,
For I shall long to heare of thy returne.
Eth. My gratious Lord, I humbly take my leaue. Exit.
King. Ethenwald farewel: Dunston, how likest thou this?
What, haue I done well in sending Ethenwald:
But in good tyme, how if he lyke the mayde,
Beleeue me Dunston, then my game is mard.
Dunst. I doe not thinke, my gratious Lord,
My Nephew Ethenwald beares that bad mind,
For hetherto he hath bene tearmed iust,
And kept your Grace his gratious fauourer.
Ki. True Dunston, yet haue I read that Loue
Hath made the sonne deceiue the father oft:
But Dunston, leauing this, come lets to court.
Dunston. I will attend vpon your Maiesty, Exeunt.
Enter Bayliefe of Hexam, and his foure sonnes, to wit, a Courtier, a Priest, a Conicatcher, and a Farmer.
Bayly. MY sonnes you see how age decaies my state,
And that my lyfe lyke snow before the sun:

Gins to dissolue into that substance wowe,
From whose inclosure grew my syze of syze,
The earth I meane, sweet mother of vs all,
Whom death authorised by heauens high power,
Shall bring at last, from whence at first I came,
Yet ere I yeeld my selfe to death, my sonnes,
Giue eare, and heare what rules I set you downe,
And first to thee my sonne, that liuest by wit,
I know thou hast so many honest sleights,
To shift and cosen smoothly on thy wit,
To cog and lie, and braue it with the best,
That twere but labour lost to counsell thee,
And therfore to the next, Walter, that seemes in shew a husband-man:
My sonne, when that thy master trusts thee most,
And thinks thou dealest as truelie as himselfe,
Be thou the first to worke deceit to him:
So by that means thou maist inrich thy selfe,
And liue at pleasure when thy maister's dead:
And when to market thou art sent with woll,
Put sand amongst it, and twill make it weigh,
The waight twise double that it did before,
The ouerplus is thine into thy purse.
But now my sonne, that keeps the Court,
Be thou a means to set the Peeres at strife,
And curri fauour for the commons loue,
If any but in conference name the King,
Informe his Maiestie they enuie him.
And if the king but moue or speake to thee,
Kneele on both knees, and say, God saue your Maiestie.
If any man be fauoured by the King,
Speake thou him faire, although in heart thou enuie him.
But who is next?

Priest. That am I father, that vse the word of God,
And liue only by the heauenly Manna.

Bayl. Who? the Priest, Giue eare my sonne,
I haue a lesson yet in store for thee:
Thou must (my son) make shew of holinesse,

And

And blinde the woꝛld with thy hipocriſie:
And ſometime giue a pennie to the pooꝛe,
But let it be in the Church oꝛ market place,
That men may pꝛaiſe thy liberalitie.
Speak againſt vſurie, yet foꝛſake no pawnes,
So thou maiſt gaine thꝛee ſhillings in the pound:
Warne thou the woꝛld from ſin and vile exceſſe,
And now and then ſpeak againſt dꝛunkennes,
So by this meanes thou ſhall be tearmed wiſe,
And with thy pꝛenes blind the peoples eies.
But now (my ſonnes) diſcourſe to me in bꝛiefe,
How you haue liued, and how you meane to die.

Conicatchet. Then (father) thus liue I that vſe me wit,
Unto my ſelfe I loue ſtill to be wiſe,
Foꝛ when I am dꝛiuen to ſhift foꝛ meat oꝛ coine,
Oꝛ gay apparell to maintaine me bꝛaue,
Then doe I flaunt it out about the change,
As if I were ſome landed Gentleman,
And falling in with ſome rich merchant there,
I take commodities foꝛ ſixe months day,
The bill being made, I muſt ſet to my hand,
Then if I pay not, they may burne the band.

Farm. Then father, hark how I haue pꝛofited,
Walter your ſon that keeps the countrie,
I haue raiſed the markets, and oppꝛeſt the pooꝛe,
And made a thouſand goe from dooꝛe to dooꝛe:
And why did I (think you) vſe this extremitie,
Becauſe I would haue coꝛne enough to feed the enemie,
Father, you know we haue but a while to liue,
Then while we liue, let each man ſhift foꝛ one:
Foꝛ he that can not make ſhift in the woꝛld,
They ſay hees vnwoꝛthy to liue in it.
And he that liues muſt ſtill increaſe his ſtoꝛe,
Foꝛ he that hath moſt wealth of all deſiꝛeth moꝛe.

Perin. Bꝛethꝛen you haue ſpoken wel, I muſt needs ſay,
But now giue eare to me, to me that keeps the court.

Father, I liue as Anstipus did, & vse my wits to flatter with
If any in priuate conference name the king, (the king.
I straight informe his Grace they enuie him:
Did Simon liue with all his subtiltie?
Ye could not tell a flattering tale more cunninglie:
Some tyme I moue the King to be effeminate,
And spend his tyme with some coy Curtizan:
Thus with the King I currie fauour still,
Though with my heart I wish him any ill:
And sometime I can counterfeit his hand and seale,
And borrow money of the communalty:
And thus I liue and flaunt it with the best,
And dice and carde inferiour vnto none:
And none dares speake against me in the court,
Because they know the King doth fauour me.

Priest. And I among my brethren and my friends
Doe still instruct them with my doctrine,
And Yea and nay goes through the world with vs.
Fie, not an oath we sweare for twentie pound,
Brethren (say we) take heed by Adams fal,
For by his sinnes we are condemned all.
Thus preach we still vnto our brethren,
Though in our heart we neuer meane the thing:
Thus doe we blind the world with holinesse,
And so by that are tearmed pure Precisians.

Bayl. Full well and wisely haue you said my sonnes,
And I commend you for your forward mindes:
That in your liues bewray whose sonnes ye are:
Here haue I bene a Bayliese three score yeares,
And vsde exaction on the dwellers by,
For if a man were brought before my face,
For colenage, theft, or liuing on his wit,
For counterfeiting any hand or seale,
The matter heard, the witnesse brought to me,
I tooke a bribe, and set the prisoners free:
So by such dealings I haue got the wealth,

Which

Which I would haue disburst among you al,
With this prouiso, that you all shall liue,
And lead such lines as I haue set you downe,
Carue to your selues, and care not what they say,
That bid you feare the fearfull Iudgment day.
Liue to your selues while you haue tyme to liue,
Get what you can, but see ye nothing giue:
But hearke my sonnes, me thinks I heare a noyse,
And gastlie visions makes me timerous,
Ah see my sonnes, where death, pall Death appeares,
To summon me before a fearfull Iudge:
Me thinks reuenge stands with an yron whip,
And cries repent, or I will punish thee:
My heart is hardened, I cannot repent.
Ah hark, me thinkes the Iudge doth giue my doome,
And I am damned to euer burning fyre:
Soule, be thou safe, and bodie flie to hell. He dyeth,

Enter Deuil, and carie him away.

Conic. Brother, why do you not read to my father?

Priest. Trulie my booke of exhortation is at my place of Exercise, and without it I can doe nothing: Gods peace bee with him. Exeunt.

Enter the King, Philarchus, his father, Dunston, and Attendants.

King. FAther say on, for now my leisure serues,
And Edgar giues thee leaue to tell thy minde,
For I perceiue thine eies are full of teares,
Which showes that manie inward passions troubles thee.
If anie here haue wronged thine aged yeares,
In keeping that from thee that is thy due,
Name but the man, and as I am Englands King,
Thou shalt haue all the fauour I can shew.

Father. Then vertuous Prince, myrrour of curtesie,
Whose Iudgements, and whose lawes for gouernment,
And punishing of euerie foule abuse,
Is like the iudgement of great Alexander,

Third of that name, whom some tearmed the Seuere,
Or lyke Vaspasian, Romes vertuous gouernour,
Who for a blowe his sonne did giue a Swaine,
Did straight commaund that he should loose his hand.
Euen vertuous Edgar, be Vaspasian once,
In giuing sentence on a graceless childe,
Know (vertuous Prince) that in my pride of yeares,
When lustfull pleasure prickt my wanton minde:
Euen in the April of my flourishing time,
I was betroth'd, and wedded to a wyfe,
By whome, too soone, I had that vnkind boy,
Whose disobedience to his ages Syze,
The Lord wil plague with torments worse than death,
This disobedient child, nay base Abstranogant,
Whome I with care did nourish to this state,
Puft with a pride, that vpstart Courtiers vse,
And seeing that I was brought to pouertie,
He did refuse to know me for his Syre.
And when I challenged him by Natures lawes,
To yeeld obedience to his Fathers age,
He told me straight, he took it in great scorne,
To be begot by one so base as I.
My age that ill could brook his sharpe replie,
Did with this wand (my Lord) reach him a blow:
But he contrary lawes of God and men,
Did strike me such a blowe in wild disdaine,
That with the stroke I fel to earth againe.

Kin. Vnkind Philarchus, how hast thou misdon
In wilful disobedience to thy Syre?
Art thou growne proud because I fauoured thee?
Why, I can quicklie make thee bare againe,
And then, I think, being in thy former state,
Thou wilt remember who thy father was:
And gentle Sophocles, in good tyme I recount,
Thy ancient saying, not so old as true,
For saith, he that hath many children,

Shall neuer be without some myth,
Nor die without some sorrowe, for if they
Be vertuous, he shall haue cause to reioyce,
But if vitious, stubburne, or disobedient,
Euer to liue in continuall sadnesse. (solent,
I am sorie (Philarchus) that my fauours haue made thee in-
Wel, I wil see now if my frownes wil make thee penitent.
Now Father, see how Nature gins to worke,
And how salt teares, lyke drops of peely dew
Fals from his eies, as sorrowing his amisse.

Phil. Most gratious Prince, vouchsafe to heare me speake,
I cannot but confesse (most gratious Soueraigne)
That I haue erd in being obstinate in wilful disobedience to
Wherin I haue wrongd nature and your Maiesty (my syre
But I am not the first whom ouersight
Hath made forgetfull of a Fathers loue:
But Fathers loue shall neuer be forgot,
If he but daine to pardon my amisse:
But if your wrath will no waies be appeased,
Rip vp this breast, where is inclosde that heart,
That bleeds with griefe to thinke on my amisse.
Ah Father pardon, sweet Father pardon me.

Fath. No (graceless Impe, degenerate and vnkinde)
Thou art no sonne of mine, but Tygers whelp,
That hast bene fostred by some Lyons pap,
But as the tallest Ash is cut down, because it yeelds no fruit,
And an vnprofitable cow, yeelding no milke, is slaughtred,
And the idle Drone, gathering no honie, is contemned,
So vngrateful children, that will yeeld no naturall obedience,
Must be cut off, as vnfit to beare the name Christians.
Whose liues digresse both from reason and humanitie,
But as thou hast dealt vnnaturallie with me,
So I resolue to pull my heart from thee,
Therefore dread Prince, vouchsafe to pitie me,
An grant I may haue Iustice on my sonne.

King. Dunſton, how counſaileſt thou the King in this?
I promiſe thee I am ſorie for the Youth,
Becauſe in heart I euer wiſht him well.
Dunſt. My gratious Lord, if I might counſell you,
I would counſell you to iudge as he deſerues,
He that diſdaines his Father in his want,
And wilfullie will diſobey his Syre,
Deſerues (my Lord) by Gods and Natures lawes,
To be rewarded with extreameſt illes:
Then as your Grace hath ſtabliſht lawes for gouernment,
So let Offenders feele the penalties.
King. I Dunſton, now thou ſpeakeſt as fits a counſellor,
But not as friend to him whom Edgar loues:
Father, what wouldeſt thou haue me doe in this?
Thou ſeeſt thy ſonne is ſorry for his fault,
And I am ſure thou would not wiſh his death,
Becauſe a fathers care commands the contrarie,
Then (gentle Father) let me plead for him,
And be his pledge for ſhunning wilfull illes.
Fath. Will Edgar now be found a partiall Iudge,
In pleading pardon for a graceleſſe childe?
Is it not true, that one cole of fyre will burne many houſes?
And one ſmall blacke in fineſt cloath that is,
Will both diſgrace and blemiſh the whole peece:
So wilfull children, ſpotted with one ill,
Are apt to fall to twentie thouſand more.
And therefore (mightie Soueraigne) leaue to ſpeake,
And paſſe iuſt ſentence on Philarchus lyfe.
Philarch. My life (dear father) that ſentence wer too hard,
Let me be baniſht from my countries bounds,
And liue as exilde in ſome wildernes,
Bard from ſocietie and ſight of men,
Or let me hazard fortune on the ſeas,
In letting me abroad ſome helmleſſe ſhip,
That either I may ſplit vpon ſome rocke,
Or els be ſwallowed in the purple Maine,

Rather

Rather than die in presence of my King,
Or bring that sorrow to your aged yeares:
If this suffise not, then let me be armde,
And left alone [illegible] thousand foes,
And if my weapon cannot set me free,
Let them be means to take my lyfe from me.

King. Father, what say you to Philarchus now?
Are you content to pardon his amisse?
Dunston, I promise thee, it greeues me much,
To heare what piteous moane Philarchus makes:
[illegible]
He thinks I see his sorrow in his face,
And his humilitie argues him penitent.
But Father, for I will not be the Iudge,
To doome Philarchus either lyfe or death,
Here take my robes, and iudge him as thou wilt,

Fath. Then vertuous Prince, seeing you will haue it so,
Although the place be farre vnfit for me,
I am content your Grace shall haue your mind,
Thus lyke an Asse attyred in costlie robes,
Or lyke a ring thrust in a foule Sowes snowt,
So doe these robes and scepter fit mine age:
But for I am Iudge, Philarchus, stand thou forth,
And know, as ther is nothing so good, but it hath some inconuenience,
So there is no man whatsoeuer without some fault:
Yet this is no argument to maintaine thy wilfull disobedience,
As the Rose hath his prickle, the finest Uelnet his bracke,
The fayrest flower his bran, so the best wit his wanton will:
But (Philarchus) thou hast bene more than wanton,
Because thou hast disobeyed the lawes both of God and nature,
The teares that thou hast shed, might warrant me
That thou art penitent for thy amisse:
Besides (my sonne) a fathers naturall care,
Doth chalenge pardon for thy first amisse.

King. Father, well said, I see thou pitiest him.

Fath. Nay, stay my Lord, this did I speak as father to Philarchus
But now my (Lord) I must speake as a Iudge.

And now Philarchus, marke what I set downe,
Because thou hast bene disobedient,
And wronged thy aged father wilfullie,
And giuen a blow to him that nourisht thee,
And thereby hast incurd thy mothers curse,
And in that curse to feele the wrath of God,
And so be hated on the earth mongst men:
And for I will be found no partiall Iudge,
Because I sit as Gods Vicegerent now:
Here I doe banish thee from Englands bounds,
And neuer to

King. There stay, now let me speake the rest:
Philarchus, thou hast heard thy fathers doome,
And what thy disobedience mooued him to,
Yet for thou wast once bedfellow to the king,
And that I loued thee as my second selfe,
Thou shalt go liue in France, in Flanders, Scotland, or els where,
And haue annual pension sent to thee,
There maist thou liue in good and honest sort,
Untill thou be recalled by the King.

Phil. Thanks, gratious King, for this great fauour showne,
And may I neuer liue, if I forget,
Your Graces kind and vnexpected loue,
In fauouring him, whom all the world forsooke:
For which my Orisons shall still be spent:
Heauens may protect your princelie Maiestie,
And louing Father, here vpon my knee,
Sorry for my amisse, I take my leaue,
Both of your selfe, my King, and countrimen.
England, farewell, more dearer vnto me,
Than pen can write, or hart can think of thee. Exit.

King. Farewell Philarchus, and father come to court,
And for Philarchus sake thou shalt not want.

Fath. Thanks (vertuous king) I humblie take my leaue. Exit

King. Dunston, I promise thee I was lyke to weepe,
To heare what piteous mone Philarchus made.

Dunston,

Dunston. Here your Grace hath shewed your selfe to be
Edgar so famed for loue and vertuous gouernment.
And I pray God your Grace may liue to be
Long Englands king to raigne with veritie. Exeunt.

Enter Honestie, Conicatcher, Broker, a Gentleman.

Honesty. IT is strange to see how men of honestie,
Are troubled manie tymes with subtil knauery:
For they haue so many clokes to colour their abuses,
That Honesty may well suspect them, but dares not detect the
For if he should, they haue by their knauerie
Got so many friends, that though neuer so bad,
They will stand in defence with the best.
I was at the water side, where I saw such deceit,
I dare not say knauerie, in paying and receiuing
Custome for outlandish ware, that I wondred to see,
Yet durst not complaine of, the reason was,
They were countenanced with men of great wealth,
Richer than I a great deale, but not honester:
Then I went into the markets, where I saw petie knauerie:
In false measuring corne, and in scales,
That wanted no lesse than two ounces in the pound.
But all this was nothing, scant worthy the talking of:
But when I came to the Exchange, I espyed in a corner of an
An Arch-coloner, a Conicatcher I meane. (Ile,
Which vsed such grose coloning, as you would wonder to heare:
But here he comes fine and braue,
Honesty markes him downe for a knaue.

Conicatcher. Why so, tis an il wind blowes no man to profit
And he is but a foole that when al failes cannot liue vpon his wit,
I haue attyred my selfe lyke a very ciuill citizen,
To drawe foure score pound from a couple of fooles,
A Gentleman hauing made ouer his land by deed of gift,
Means to coosen a broker with a false conueiance:
Al's one to me, I shall loose nothing by the bargaine,
But here comes the Broker, I wil walk as I regarded him not

Broker. God saue you sir, I see you keep your houre,
But heare you sir, hath the Gentleman that conueiance you told
me of redy, I hope sir, I shal need misdoubt no deceit in the mat-
ter, for I meane plainly, and so I hope do you.

Conicatch. Sir, as concerning the conueiance, I assure you
And he hath such good interest in it, (tis so good
That were I furnisht with so much money presently,
No man in the world should haue it but my selfe,
And for my owne part, you neede not suspect me,
For I would not discredit my selfe for a thousand pound,
For the Gentleman is my very friend,
And being in some want, is enforst to pawne lande.
For the supplying of a present necessitie.
Tush, the interest is good, I warrant you.

Honesty. And thats much worth, some wil say,
A crafty knaue needs no broker,
But here is a crafeie knaue and a broker to:
Then imagin there wants not a knaue.

Broker. But tell me sir, when did he promise to be here,
What, will it be long ere he come:

Conicat. Nay, it will not be long ere he come,
For the conueyance was made ere I came from the scriuenars,
And in good time, here he comes, God saue you sir,
Here is the man I told you of, that wold lend you the money,
He is a very honest man, and but for my sake I know
He would not do it, but is the land dispatcht another way:
If you be ready to seale, he is readie with the money,
Heare you (sir) you haue a good bargain, dispatch it quicklie.

Brok. Being aduertised by my friend, this honest merchant,
That you haue certaine land to pawne for present money,
Now I had not so much money of mine owne at this tyme,
But I made meanes to borrow so much of a friend of mine,
Because I would not haue you fal into bad mens handling

Gent. I thank you sir for this vnspeakeable fauour,
If you deale amisse with me, I am vndone for euer. (pound,

Brok. I would not deal amisse with any man for a thousand

Honesty.

Honestie. And yet he wil cut a mans throte for twelue pence, Here is a cluster of knaues, here lackes but the baily of Hexham

Brok. Wel sir, here is the mony, wil it please you seale the assurance

Gent. With all my heart.

Honest. God saue her sirs, and her good friendes, is a poore Welshman, come as far as Carnaruan in Wales to receiue a litle money, and here a has paid her I cannot tell what. Here you maister, wat is it not brasse money?

Brok. No, honest fellow, tis a good Angel in gold.

Honest. Who told him my name? heare you maister, a has a great deale more in her bosome, but a will take her leaue.

Conicatch. Nay, stay and dyne with me: I must fetch him ouer for all his golde.

Hone. Mary I thank her good Maister, I wil waight vpon her I warrant you.

Brok. Now sir, haue you sealed and subscribed?

Gent. I haue sir.

Brok. And you deliuer this as your deed to my vse?

Gent. With all my heart Syr, and hope you wil vse me well.

Brok. We wil talk of that another time, here is your money.

Gent. I thank you sir, Ile be gone.

Conicatch. Heare you sir, was not this brauely done?

Gent. Excellent: hold, here is fourty pound, as I promised thee.

Conicatch. I thank you sir: do you heare Sir, you haue got a thousand pound by the bargaine: but much good may it doe you.

Brok. God a marcy, and here's fourty pound for thy paines, Such another match, and Ile giue thee a hundred pound.

Conicate. I thank you sir, God bwy: now to my welshman: Sirra, let me see thy peece of gold, Ile tell thee whether it be weight or no? Hast thou anie more, Ile giue thee white mony for it.

Honest. Yes, a has a great deale more in her bosome, But a will haue no wit money: O a loues led mony.

Conic. Wel, Ile keep thē for thee til thou come to my house.

Hon. Why Cutbert, wilt thou neuer leaue thy old knauery? Why, we should gree together lyke belles,

If thou wert but hanged firſt,
Why we are as neere kin together,
As the Cats of Banbery be to the bels of Lincolne.
Why man, we are all birds of a feather,
And whoſoeuer ſaies nay, we will hold together.
Come you mad ſlaue, thou doeſt not know me,
Tuſh, I haue done many better trickes than this.
Conic. Why (you baſe ſlaue) take you me for your fellow?
Why, I am of good reputation in the citie,
And held in account with the beſt.
Honeſty. And yet thou art Cutbert the Conicatcher,
The Bailiefs ſonne of Hexham, whoſe father being dead,
The deuill carried to hell for his knauerie:
How ſayeſt thou, art not thou his ſonne?
This graue blacke cloake makes you ſo proud,
You haue forgotten who was your father.
Coni. Nay, I haue not forgotten that my father was a Bai-
A man that would liue to himſelfe. (liefe,
And yet in faith, he gaue me nothing at his death,
But good counſell, how to liue in the world.
But ſirra, as thou knoweſt me, I pray thee bewray me not,
And in any thing I can, commaund me.
Honeſt. Tuſh, feare not me, I will be as ſecrete as thy ſelfe:
But ſirra, tis thus, if thou wilt doe one thing,
I ſhall tell thee, I will giue thee an hundred pound,
Tis nothing with thee I am ſure.
Con. Tuſh, tel me what it is: Ile doe it, I warrant thee.
Honeſt. Nothing but this, to ſweare vpon a booke
That thou ſaweſt a Gentleman pay a Farmer
Foure hundred pound, as the laſt payment of a Farme,
That the ſaid Gentleman bought of him.
Con. Tuſh, if this be all, let me alone. I will doe it.
Why, tis nothing for me to ſweare,
For I am forſworne already, but when is the day?
Honeſt. Why to morrow.
Conic, But where ſhall I meet you?

Honesty. Why vpon the exchange at eight a clocke.
Con. I will not misse, til that time fare well. Exit.
Hon. Farewel, nay, you will scant farewel
By that tyme I haue done, but I must about my busines,
To synd some knacke to know this knaue at large.

Enter Ethenwald.

Ethen. THe night drawes on, Phœbus is declining towards the West.
Now shepheards bear their flocks vnto the folds.
And wintred [illegible] couered in their stalles
Now leaue to feede, and gin to take their rest,
Blacke dusk ie cloudes inuyron round the globe,
And heauen is couered with a Sable robe,
Now am I come to doe the kings command.
To court a Wench & win her for the King.
But if I lyke her well, I say no more,
Tis good to haue a hatch before the doore:
But first I will moue her Father to preser
The earnest suit I haue in canuasing,
So may I see the Maid, woo, wed, I and bed her to:
Who is here: what ho.

Enter Osricke.

Os. Earl Ethenwald, welcome, how fares our friends at court
What cause constrains your Honor, that thus late
You visite vs, that dreame not of your comming:
Ethenwald. My Lord, I am come vnlooked for, very true,
So is my cumming yet conceald from you.
Osr. Your Honor shall repose you here to night,
And earlie as you please, begin your talke,
Tyme serues not now, come Ethenwald,
As welcome as the King himselfe to me.
Eth. Now Ethenwald, if Fortune fauour thee,
Thou maist prooue happie loue to Alfrida. Exeunt.

Enter Honestie, and the King disguised.

Hon. This is the place, and this the appointed tyme,
I know heel keep his word, for he thinks me his friend,
King. But tell me Honestie, am I not well disguised.

Cas

Can any man discerne me by my lookes to be the King,
Take heed of that, for then our game is mard:
And hast thou promised him what reward he shall haue.

Hon. Tush feare not you, for you neuer knew honest man dissemble with his friend,
Though many friends dissemble with honest men:
But, my Lord, the cards be shufled, and here comes a knaue.

Enter Conicatcher.

Conic. Tis strange to see how men of our knowledge liue,
And how we are hated of the baser sort,
Because (forsooth) we liue vpon our wit:
But let the baser sort thinke as they will,
For he may best be termed a Gentleman,
That when all fayles, can liue vpon his wit.
And if all fayles, then haue I got a wench,
That cuts and deales, to maintaine my expence,
Now I vse her, as men vse sweetest flowers,
That while they are sweet and pleasant to the eie,
I doe regard them for their pleasant smell:
But when their cullour fades, and sent decaies,
I cast them off for men to trample on:
But to the purpose, here is the Gentleman
My honest friend did lately tell me of.
Sir, though I had another businesse of import,
That might haue hindred me for comming here,
Yet in regard I am loth to breake my word,
I haue set my other businesse cleane apart,
Because you should not iudge amisse of me,

Honest. I find you kind Sir, and your self shal see
How I will labour to requite your curtesie.
This is the honest man I told you of,
One that will doe you pleasure in the cause,
So be it you will content him for his paines.

King. Els God forbid, and good sir, thus it is,
I bought a farme of one that dwels here by,
And for an earnest gaue an hundred pound,

The reſt was to be paid as ſixe weekes paſt,
Now ſir, I would haue you as witneſſe,
That at my houſe you ſaw me pay three hundred pound,
And for your paines I will giue you a hundred pound:
Beſides, I will ſtand your friend in what I may,
You heare the cauſe, what will your conſcience ſerue you to do it?

Conic. How ſay you ſir, my conſcience, then you touch me,
I tell you ſir, my conſcience wil ſerue me to doe more than this:
Why, I haue bene a poſte knight in Weſtminſter this xii. yeare,
And ſworne to that which no one els would venture on.
Why, I haue ſworne againſt mine owne father for mony:
I haue ſworne right or wrong any wayes for money,
whē I haue receiued mony before witnes, I ſwore to the cōtrary
And do you miſdoubt me in ſo sleight a matter as this,
When I haue ſworne againſt father, mother and all my kin?

Honeſt. I told you ſir how reſolute you ſhould find him,
He doeth it without feare I warrant you: (your purpoſe,
I think that in London you could not haue found a man ſo fit for
I knew his father (ſir) a man of honeſt reputation,
And one whoſe lyfe was witneſſe to the lyfe he led,
He was a Bailiefe (ſir) though I ſay't, but no Bayliefe that vſde
He had too good a conſcience for that. (deceit,

King. Al the better for that, for it ſhould ſeem by his behaueor
That he hath had good bringing vp.

Conicate. Indeed my father in his lyfe time was a man,
Giuen to the feare of God, and to vſe much deuotion.

Hon. I, but he gaue nothing for Gods ſake, except it were
hard words or blowes, and they had bene better kept that giuen:
But huſht, here comes the Judge.

Enter Perin a Iudge, and Dunſton a Farmer.

King. Heare you ſir, if you be in readines, here is the Judge.

Conic. I ſir, fear not, I warrant you, is that your aduerſary?
What an old cruſt it is?

Honeſt. I think the villaine hath a face hardened with ſteel,
He could neuer be ſo impudent els.

Dunſton. If it pleaſe your Worſhip, this is the man,

That wrongfully would haue my farme from me,
Facing me downe that he hath paid me that,
Which he neuer offred, nor I neuer receiued:
And this day he hath promised to make proofe,
That he hath paid me ful foure hundred pound.
King. And so I can, and heres my witnes to it,
That saw me when I paid the money.
Dunston. Why, I am sure he wil not say it,
I neuer saw the man in all my lyfe.
Conic. No sir: but I saw you, and was a witnes,
When this Gentlemã paid you three hundred pound
As the last paiment for the farme he bought.
Perin. But where was the money tendered?
Con. At the Gentlemans house.
Per. You see father, this marchant wil be witnes
That he saw so much money tendred,
And you receiued it, being full satisfyed,
As the last payment for the farme he bought,
And if this marchant take his oath against you,
That seuen daies past he saw the mony teadered,
I must passe sentence then against you needs.
But wil you sweare on the bible this is true?
Coni. I sir, and to that intent I came hether,
For I wil neuer refuse to swear a truth while I liue
Dunston. Yet ere thou speake, vouchsafe to heare me speake,
Full three score Winters Gentle sir I haue past,
And age hath brought gray haires vpon my head.
Looke but vpon my face, and thou shalt see,
The perfect patterne of humilitie.
Thou man of worth, or citizen, what ere thou be,
Weigh but my charge, and then thou wilt not swear
I haue fiue sonnes, al pretie tender babes,
That liue vpon the farme that he would haue,
Twelue hundred sheep do feed vpon the plaines,
That yearlie bring a great increase to me,
Besides a hundred Oxen fatly fed:

That

That euerie Winter feed within my ſtalles,
And twentie poore men liuing neere my houſe,
I daylie feed, and all vpon my Farme:
Go but among my neighbours, where I dwell,
And heare what good report they giue of me.
The poore man neuer yet went from my doore,
But to my power I did releeue his want:
I was no Farmer that inricht my ſelfe:
By rayſing markets and oppreſſing poore,
But I haue ſold my corne full manie tymes
At better rate, than I could wel affoord,
And all to help my needie brethren:
Then ere thou ſwearſt, cal al theſe things to mind,
And thou wilt weep, and leaue to ſweare vntrueths,
Confuſion to thy bodie and thy ſoule.

Perin. Wel, if thou be wel aduiſed, take thy oath,
But yet remember before whome thou ſweareſt,
The God of trueth and perfect equitie,
Which will reuenge wrong to the innocent,
with thouſand plagues and torments woorſe than death.

Con. By the holy contents of this Byble,
And by that iuſt God, before whome I ſtand, I ſaw this man,

King. Peace, ſhameleſſe villain, execrable wretch,
Monſter of nature, degenerate miſcreant,
Who euer knew or heard ſo vile an oath,
Wildly pronounc'd by ſuch a damned ſlaue,
Haue I ſuch monſtrous vipers in my land,
That with their verie breaths infect the aire,
Say Dunſton, haſt thou euer heard the lyke.

Dunſt. My Liege, ſuch lothſome weeds muſt needs infect the corne,
Such Cankers periſh both the root and branch,
Unleſſe they be ſoone ſpied and weeded out:

Kin. Ile be the husbandman to mowe ſuch Tares,
Here Honeſty, let him be manacled:
And ſcar his forehead, that he may be knowne,
As Cain for murder, he for periurie.

I beſeech your Grace be good to me.
I, you ſhal haue a cold yron clapt in your forehead,
& I would ſay, you are a ſlaue indeede.
Conicatcher. Good Honeſty.
Hone. Good villaine, theres no help for you. Exeunt

Enter Ethenwald alone.

Eth. My fancies thoughts, lyke the labouring Spyder,
That ſpreads her nets, to entrap the ſillie Flie:
Or lyke the reſtleſſe billowes of the ſeas,
That euer alter by the fleeting ayre,
Still houering paſt their wonted paſſions,
Makes me amazed in theſe extremities,
The King commands me on his embaſſage,
To Oſricks daughter, beauteous Alfrrida,
The height and pride of all this bounding ill,
To poſte amaine, plead loue in his behalfe,
To court for him, and woo, and wed the maid,
But haue you neuer heard that theame,
Deceit in loue is but a merriment,
To ſuch as ſeeke a riuall to preuent,
Whether (diſtraught) romes my vnruly thoughts,
It is the King I coſen of his choiſe,
And he nil brook Earl Ethenwald ſhould prooue
False to his Prince, eſpecially in loue.
Thē thus it ſhal be, Ile tel the king the maid is fair,
Of nut browne cullour, comelie and fair ſpoken,
Worthie companion to an Earle or ſo:
But not a Bride for Edgar, Englands King,
This will alay the ſtrong effects in loue.
Fame wrought in Edgars mind of Alfrida.
Well, Ile to court, and dalie with the King,
And worke ſome means to draw his mynde from loue.

Enter a Knight, Squire, and Farmer.

Knight NEighbour Walter I cannot but admire to ſee
How houſekeeping is decayed within
this thirtie yeare,

But

But where the fault is God knowes, I knowe not:
My father in his lyfe time gaue hospitality to all strangers, and
Distressed trauellers, his table was neuer emptie of bread, beefe
And beere, he was woont to keep a hundred tall men in his hall.
He was a feaster of all commers in generall,
And yet was he neuer in want of money:
I thinke God did blesse him with increase, for his bountiful mind
Farm. Truly sir, I am sorrie, you ar fallen into decay,
In that you want to maintaine houshould charge,
And whereof comes this want, I will tell you sir,
Tis only throw your great housekeeping:
Be ruled by me, and doe as I aduise you:
You must learne to leaue so great a traine of men,
And keepe no more than needs of force you must,
And those you keepe, let them be simple men,
For they will be content with simple fare,
Keepe but a boy or two within your house,
To run of errants, and to wait on you,
And for your kitchin, keep a woman cooke,
One that will serue for thirtie shillings a yeare:
And by that means you saue two liueries,
And if ye will keep retainers towards you,
Let them be Farmers, or rich husbandmen,
For you shal find great profit (sir) in keeping them:
For if you stand in need of corne or hay,
Send but to them, and you may haue it strait:
And if you kill a Beefe, let it be so leane
The Butcher nor the Graser will not buy it,
Your drinke is too strong, and tastes too much of malt,
Tush, single beere is better far, both for your profit, and your ser-
And at a Christmasse time feast none at al, (uants healthy
But such as yeeld you some commoditie:
I meane such as will send you now and then,
Fat Geese and Capons to keep house withall,
To these and none els would I haue you liberall.
Knight. Why neighbor, my goods are lent me to no other end

But to releeue my needie brethren, but God I hope hath in ſtore (for me.

Far. I, truſt you to that, & you may hap die a begger:

Squ. Why ſir, if he ſhould not truſt in God, in whom ſhould he truſt, for God is the giuer of all good whatſoeuer.

Far. True, and yet tis good for a man to truſt to himſelfe now and then: for if you be downe, and bid God help you vp, and do not help your ſelf, you may fortune lie and periſh: and therefore, ſerue God on Sundaies, as you are appointed, and thereby hope to be ſaued, for by your almes deeds you cannot, for if you giue to the poore, there be manie will ſay, he thinks to bee ſaued by his almes deedes: and thus you ſhal be ill thought on for your good wil, and therfore learn to prouide for your ſelf, let God prouide for the poore

Knig. I tel you neighbor, my great grandfather, & all my predeceſſors haue bene held in good regard for their good houſekeeping, and (God willing) their good names ſhal neuer take an exigent in me, for I wil (God willing) keepe ſuch hoſpitalitie to my death, as my ſtate can maintaine, and I will rather ſell my land, to maintain houſ-keeping, then keeping my land make ſale of my good name for houſekeeping, but ſtay, who comes here.

Enter two poore old men and a Bayliefe.

One old man. God ſaue you ſir, I pray be good to me for cham a poore man, and I cannot tell what you will doe, for you ſay my horſe hath broken into your corn, or your corne into my horſe, But indeed my neighbor ſaw your boy driue my horſe into a field But Ile ſtand to nothing, nowe I am warnd with a peece of paper, and a litle ware, to prepare or proceed to London, And there I am inuented, I cannot tell for what: The Bailiefe here hath arreſted me ere I was weary againſt my will: he ſaid it was vpon your ſuit, & yet he laid his hands on me, Nay more, on my ſhoulder.

Another old. And ſir, and it may pleaſe you, I borrowed certen corn, and I brought you your corne again, and yet you reſt me.

Far. True ſir, but then was corne ſold for foure ſhillings a buſhell, and now tis ſold for two.

Kni. I ſir, but he borrowed corne, and promiſed to pay you corn againe, and you can haue but ſo much as you lent:

For

For if he should pay you at the rate you demande,
You wold haue for the twentie bushels you lent, fourtie,
Which were neither right nor conscience.

Far. O sir, I pray let me alone with my conscience,
You would haue me giue al I haue away to the poore, & want as you do, I pray let me alone to deale for my selfe: heare you, haue you rested them?

Bail. I haue sir as you commanded me.

Far. Then to prison with them, til they haue paid such dammages as the law shal award them.

One poor. Hear you sir, if you shuld bid your boy breake downe a gap, and driue in my horse, twere litle better than plaine knauerie, for my horse is as honest a horse, as any is in this towne.

Another. Wel neighbor, we wil haue the horse examined before an officer, and my boy Jack shal write what the horse speaks and if the horse say a was driuen in against his wil,
Then you may haue the law of him, neighbor,
For all the horses in the parish wil be sworne for his horse.
But Ile stand to nothing. (with them.

Far. Wel, to prison with thē til they haue paid your due, away

One poor. Nay, I pray, be more miserable to me, and I wil giue you fourtie shillings when I haue it.

Far. By the Mas the knaue hath a pretie cottage,
Ile see and I can get that: sirra, you haue an old cottage,
If you will make me that ouer by deed of gift,
I am content to draw my action.

Another p. My house? why tis my goods, my wife, my land,
My horse my asse, or any thing that is his: no you Caterpiller,
I will neuer make away my house, I wil die first.

Squi. But tel me sir, howe much wold you haue of them for their trespasse?

Far. Mary, for fourtie shillings, and yet I befriend them,
Why sir, I hope you will not pay it for them?

Kni. But I wil: sirra Batlie, I will answere the poore mens debts, and come home to me for thy fee anon, go old men.
Get you home and praise God.

One poor. Mary Iesus bleſſe you: naibor, how many ſuch good Knightes haue you now a dayes?

Anoth. Too few, neighbor, the more is the pitie. Exeunt

But come lets away.

Knight. But who comes her?

Enter Perin and Honeſty.

Per. God ſaue you gentlemen, the king greets you, and at this time, Hauing ſome occaſion, to vſe mony, hath ſent to know What you that be Knightes and Squires wil lend his Grace, And you maiſter Farmer, be brief (ſir) for I cannot ſtay.

Kni. Sir, though houſ-keeping be ſome hinderance to my willing mind by reaſon it robs me of that, which ſhuld bewray my louing mind both to my prince & country, money I meane which at this time I ſtand in ſome want of, yet of that ſmal ſtore that I haue, am willing to impart the lending of the king xx. pound, and more I aſſure you I am not able.

Perin. Very wel, and what ſay you maiſter Squire.

Squire, I ſay that my reuenewes are but ſmall, yet I will lend his Maieſtie ten pound:

Per. Very wel, but what ſaith the Farmer?

What can he ſpare the King?

Far. Marry ſir, I am a poore Farmer, & yet I can affoord To lend the King a hundred or two of pounds,

And heare you ſir, if you prefer a ſuit I haue to the King,

I will giue you fourtie Angels for your paines:

Beſides, I will giue you the keeping of a dozen iades:

And now and then meat for you and your horſe.

If you come to my houſe and lie a whole yeare.

Per. Why thats well ſaid, and I commend thy honeſt mind,

Would all men wer of thy mind:

I warrant thee, thou art an honeſt man, & one that loues the king

But tel me, what wouldſt thou haue me doe?

Far. Nothing but procure me the Kings letter to conuey corn beyond ſeas, for in England it is ſo good cheap, that a man can make no liuing by ſelling thereof: therfore if the King wil grant me his letter, I will at any time, lend him fiue or ſixe hundred pound,

and perhaps neuer ask it again, and I wil not forget your paines.

Per. Sir, feare not, I wil do it for you, I warrant you,
For I tel you, I can do much with the King. (for,

Hon. I beleeue you wil do more than you wil be commended
The Courtier resembleth the Jay, that decketh her self with the
feathers of other birds, to make her self glorious:
So the Courtier must be braue, tho he be hangd at the gallous.

Far. Wel sir, wil it please you to come and dine with me.

Per. I thanke you sir hartily.

Far. But whats he there in your company.

Perin. A plaine fellow, and his name is Honesty.

Far. O let him go where he will, for he shal not dine with me.

Hon. See how the Farmer feares my name,
What wold he doe if he knew my nature:
But hear you (maister Courtier) shall I dine with you:
I promise you sir, I am very hungrie,

Per. Trulie Honesty, if I were furnisht with money,
I would not stick to giue thee thy dinner,
But now thou seest I am but a guest my selfe.

Far. Truly honest fellow, if I were certaine of my cheere, I
wold bid thee to dinner, but know not my prouisiõ I promise thee

Kni. Heare you sir, will it please you to take part of a peece of
beefe with me, you shal be welcome.

Perin. I thank you sir, but I must dine with my honest friend
here, els I would not refuse your gentle offer. Exeunt.

Hon. See how he can vse my name and not me,
But I perceiue I may goe dine with Duke Humfrie,
God bwy Gentlemen, for none here hath occasion to vse Honesty

Kni. Yes Honesty, thou shalt be my brothers guest and mine.

Hon. Mary and I thank you to, for now the world may say,
That Honesty dines with Hospitality to day, Exeunt.

Enter Osrick and Alfrida, and to them Ethenwald.

Osr. DAughter, see that you entertaine the Earle,
As best beseemes his state and thy degree:
He comes to see whether Fame haue worthily
Bene niggard, in commending thee or no,
So shall thy vertues be admired at the court.

And thou be praised for kind and debonair,
For curtesie contents a Courtier oft:
When nothing els seemes pleasant in his eies.
Alfr. Father, you shall perceiue that Alfrida
Will doe her best in honouring of your age,
To entertaine the Earle of Cornwell so,
That he shall think him highlie fauoured,
Throw louing speech and curteous entertain.
Ol. How fares my L. of Cornwel, what displeased
Or troubled with a mood thats male content:
Eth. Not male content, and yet I am not well,
For I am troubled with a painfull rume,
That when I would be merry, troubles me,
And commonlie it holds me in my eies.
With such extreames, that I can scantly see.
Olr. How long haue you bene troubled with the
Or is it a pain that you haue vsuall: (pain,
Or is it some water, that by taking cold,
Is falne into your eies, and troubles you:
Erh. I cannot tel, but sure it paines me much,
Nor did it euer trouble me till nowe,
For till I came to lodge within your house,
My eies were cleare, and I neuer felt the paine.
Ol. I am sorry that my house shuld cause your griefe
Daughter, if you haue any skil at all,
I pray you vse your cunning with the Earle,
And see if you can ease him of his paine.
Alf. Father, such skill as I receiued of late,
By reading many pretie pend receites,
Both for the ache of head, and paine of eyes,
I wil, if so it please the Earle to accept it,
Indeuour what I may to comfort him.
My Lord, I haue waters of approoued worth,
And such as are not common to be found:
Any of which, if it please your honour, vse them,
I am in hope, will help you to your sight,
Eth. No (matchlesse Alfrida) they will doe me no good,

For

For I am troubled only when I looke.
Alfrida. On what (my Lord) or whome?
Ethen. I cannot tell.
Alf. Why let me see your eies (my Lord) looke vpon me.
Eth. Then twil be worse.
Alf. What, if you looke on me? then Ile be gone.
Eth. Nay stay, sweet loue, stay beauteous Alfrida,
And giue the Earle of Cornwel leaue to speake:
Know Alfrida, thy beautie hath subdued,
And captiuate the Earle of Cornwels heart
Briefly, I louethee, seeme I neere so bold,
So rude and rashlie to prefer my sute,
And if your father giue but his consent,
Eased be that paine that troubles Ethenwald.
And this considered, Osricke shall proue,
My father, and his daughter be my loue,
Speake Osrick, shall I haue her I or no?
Os. My Lord with al my hart, you haue my consent
If so my daughter please to condiscend.
Ethen. But what saith Alfrida?
Alf. I say (my Lord) that seing my father grants,
I will not gainsay, what his age thinks meet,
I do appoint my selfe (my Lord) at your dispose,
Eth. Wel Osrick, nowe you see your daughter's mine,
But tel me when shall be the wedding day,
Osr. On Monday next, till then you are my guest.
Ethen. Weil Osricke, when our nuptiall rites are past,
I must to Court, of businesse to the King.
Alfr. Let that be as you please my Lord,
But stay not long, for I shall hardlie brooke your absence then.
Eth. Feare not Alfrida, I will not stay there long,
But come, let vs in Father, pray lead the way. Exeunt

Enter the King and Dunston. (Kings

King. Tel me Dunston, what thinkest thou of the fauors of
Dun. I think of Kings fauors as of a Marigold flower,
[illegible] as long as the Sun shineth openeth her leaues,

And with the least cloud closeth againe:
Or lyke the Violets in America, that in sommer yeeld an odiffe-
And in winter a most infectious sauour: (rous smell,
For at euery ful sea they flourish, or at euery dead ope they vade:
The fish Palerna being perfect white in the calme,
Yet turneth blacke with euery storme:
Or lyke the trees in the deserts of Africa,
That flourish but while the southwest wind bloweth:
Euen so (my Lord) is the fauours of kings to them they fauour,
For as their fauours giue lyke, so their frownes yeeld death.

King. Wel said, Dunston, but what merits he that dissembles with his Soueraigne?

Dunston. In my opinion (my Lord) he merits death.

King. Then assure thy selfe, if Ethenwald dissemble, he shall die: but who comes here? Perin, what newes, that thou commest in such hast? and what is he that beares thee company?

Per. It is my gratious Lord an honest man,
And one it seemes that loues you Maiestie:
For as your Grace gaue me in charge, (could make,
I went about into the countrey, to see what summes of money I
Among the cheefest of the communaltie:
And mongst the richest Knights that I could fynd,
They would lend your Grace at most but twenty ponnd,
And euery Squire would lend you Grace but ten:
Then came I mongst the rest to this plaine man,
And asked him what he would lend the king,
He aunswered sir, you see I am but poore,
Not halfe so wealthy as a Knight or Squire,
And yet in signe of dutie to his Grace,
I wil lende his Maiestie two hundred pound.

King. Thanks honest fellow, for thy loue to vs,
And if I may but pleasure thee in ought,
Command me to the vttermost I may:
England hath too few men of thy good mind.

Enter Honestie and Piers plowman.

Honesty, what newes? where hast thou bene so long?

Honest. A my Lord, I haue bene searching for a priuie knaue
One (my Lord) that feeds vpon the poore commons,
And makes poore Piers ploughman weare a thread bare coate,
It is a farmer (my Lord) which buyes vp all the corn in the market, and sends it away beyond seas, & thereby feeds the enemie.

Kin. Alas, poore piers plowman, what ailest thou: why doest thou weep, peace man, if any haue offended thee,
Thou shalt be made amends vnto the most.

piers plow. I beseech your Grace to pitie my distresse,
There is an vnknowne theefe that robs the common wealth,
And makes me and my poore wife and children beg for maintenance.
The tyme hath bene (my Lord) in diebus illis,
That the Plowmans coat was of good homespun russet cloth,
Whereof neither I nor my seruants had no want,
Though now both they and I want,
And all by this vnknown Farmer:
For there cannot be an aker of ground to be sold,
But he will find money to buy it: nay my Lord, he hath money to buy whole Lordships, and yet but a Farmer,
I haue kept a poore house where I dwel this four score yeare,
Yet was I neuer driuen to want till now:
I beseech your Grace, as you haue still bene iust,
To seek redresse for this oppression
I beseech your Grace reade my humble petition.

Kin. Let me see the humble petition, of poor piers plowman,
Alasse poore piers, I haue heard my father say,
That piers plowman was one of the best members in a commō wealth.
For his table was neuer emptie of bread, beefe, and beere,
As a help to all distressed trauellers: but where thou tellest mee,
I harbour him, and he is dailie vnder my elbow,
I assure thee tis more than I know, for I harbour none but this which is my honest friend.

Hon. Is this your honest friend: the deuill a is (my Lord)
This is he: if you doubt my word to be true, call in Clarke of the Assyses, now shall your Grace see,
How Honesty can shake out a knaue in this company:

Enter Clarke of the Assyse.

Sirra, tell me who hath most poore men in suit at this Syses?

Clark. That hath Walter would haue more:
He hath one poore man in suit for certaine Barlie,
And another for that his horse was taken in his corne.

Honest. But what inditemennts are against him, read them

Read the Inditement.

Clark. First, he hath conueyed corne out of the land to feede the Enemie. Next, hee hath turned poore Piers Plowman out of doores by his great raising of rents.

Nert, he is knowne to bee a common disturber of men of their quiet, by seruing Writs on them, and bringing them to London, to their vtter vndoing.

Also, he keeps corne in his barne, and suffers his brethren and neighbours to lie and want, and thereby makes the market so deare, that the poore can buy no corne.

Kin. Ynough: now fie vpon thee, thou monster of nature,
To seeke the vtter vndoing of manie, to inrich thy selfe:
Honesty, take him, and vse him as thou wilt.

Honesty. Come sir, I thinke I found out your knauerie,
Away sir, and beare your fellow companie.

Exeunt omnes but the King and Dunston.

Enter Ethenwald.

Eth. Health and good hap befall your Maiestie,

Kin. Ethenwald welcome, how fares our beautious loue,
Be breefe man, what, will she loue or no?

Eth. Then as your Grace did giue to me in charge,
I haue discharged my dutie euery way,
And communed with the maid you so commend:
For when the Sun, rich Father of the day,
Eie of the world, King of the spangled vale,
Had run the circuit of the Horizon,
And that Artofelex, the nights bright star,
Had brought fair Luna from the purpled mayne,
Where she was dallying with her wanton loue,
To lend her light to wearie trauellers,

Then

Then twas my chance to arriue at Ofricks house:
But being late I could not then vnfolde
The message that your Grace had giuen in charge:
But in the morne Aurora did appeare,
At sight of whom the Welkin straight did cleare.
Then was the spangled vale of heauen drawne in,
And phœbus rose lyke heauens imperiall King:
And ere the Sun was mounted fiue degrees
The maid came downe and gaue me the good day.
King. But being come, what said she then?
How lykest thou her, what is she fair or no?
Eth. My Lord, she is coloured lyke the Scythia Maide,
That challenged Lucio at the Olympian games,
Well bodied, but her face was something blacke,
Lyke those that follow houshold businesse:
Her eies wer hollow sunke into her head,
Which makes her haue a clowdie countenance,
She hath a prettie tongue, I must confesse,
And yet (my Lord) she is nothing eloquent.
King. Why then (my Lord,) theres nothing good in her.
Eth. Yes my Lord, she is fit to serue an Earle or so,
But far vnfit for Edgar Englands King.
King. So then she is fit for Ethenwald our Cornish Earle,
But far vnfit for Edgar Englands king:
Well Ethenwald, I sound your policie:
But tell me ifaith, doest thou loue the maide.
Speake truelie man, dissemble not.
Ethen. I doe (my gratious Lord) and therewithall,
Intreate your Maiestie to pardon me.
King. Ethenwald, I am content to pardon thee,
And will be with thee my selfe ere long,
To doe thee honour in thy mariage,
And therefore Ethenwald thou maist depart,
And leaue vs til we visite thee at home.
Eth. My gratious Lord I humbly take my leaue.
Dunst. If it please your Grace pardon me, and giue me leaue

I would gladlie bring my Nephew on the way.
Ki. With all my heart Dunston, but stay not long.
Eth. I humbly take my leaue of your Maiesty.
Exeunt Dunst. and Ethenwald.
Kin. Farewel Ethenwald, but Perin tell me now,
What doest thou thinke of Alfrida,
Is she so foule as Ethenwald reports her,
Beleeue me then she had bene vnfit for me.
per. My gratious Lord, Ethenwald hath dissembled with (your Maiesty,
For Alfrida is fair and vertuous:
For last night, being in priuate conference,
He tould me he had deuised a mean
To collour with the King by forged excuse,
No, no, (quoth he) my Alfrida is faire,
As is the radiant North star Chrystaline,
That guides the wet and wearie Traueller,
Sould with the surge of Neptunes watery main,
And thus my Lord, he fell to praising her,
And from his pocket straight he drew this counterfeit,
And said twas made by beauteous Alfrida.
King. A face more faire than is the Suns bright beames,
Or snow white Alpes beneath faire Cynthea,
Who would refuse with Hercules to spin,
When such faire faces bears vs companie.
Faire Pollyxena neuer was so faire:
Nor she that was proud loue to Troylus.
Great Alexanders loue, Queen of Amazons,
Was not so faire as is faire Alfrida.
But perin, be thou secrete to the King,
And I will sound these subtill practizes,
And Ethenwald, be sure I will quittance thee,
And teach thee how to dallie with thy King,
But perin lets to Court vntill to morne,
And then weele take horse and away. Exeunt.
Enter mad men of Goteham, to wit, a Miller,
a Cobler, and a Smith.

Miller.

Miller. Now let vs consult among our selues,
How to misbehaue our selues to the Kings worship,
Jesus blesse him: and when he comes, to deliuer him this petition
I think the Smith were best to do it, for hees a wise man.

Cobler. Naighbor, he shall not doe it, as long as Jefferay the Translater is Maior of the towne. (the Mace:

Smith. And why, I pray, because I would haue put you from

Miller. No, not for that, but because he is no good fellow,
Nor he will not spend his pot for companie.

Smith. Why (sir) there was a god of our occupation, and I charge you by vertue of his godhed, to let me deliuer the petitiõ.

Cob. But soft you, your God was a Cuckold, and his Godhead was the horne, and thats the Armes of the Godhead you call vpon. Go, your are put down with your occupation, and now I wil not grace you so much as to deliuer the petition, for you.

Smith What, dispraise our trade?

Cob. Nay, neighbour, be not angrie, for Ile stand to nothing onlie but this.

Smith. But what; beare witnesse a giues me the But, and I am not willing to shoot: Cobler, I will talke with you: nay, my bellowes, my coletrough, and my water shall enter armes with you for our trade: O neighbour, I can not beare it, nor I wil not beare it.

Mil. Heare you, neighbour, I pray consuade your self and be not wilful, & let the Cobler deliuer it, you shal see him mar all,

Smith. At your request I will commit my selfe to you,
And lay my selfe open to you, lyke an Dyster.

Mil. Ile tell him what you say: Heare you naighbor, we haue consulted to let you deliuer the petition, doe it wisely for the credite of the towne.

Cob. Let me alone, for the Kings Carminger was here,
He sayes the King will be here anon.

Smith. But heark, by the Mas he comes.

Enter the King, Dunston, and Perin.

King. How now Perin, who haue we here?

Cob. We the townes men of Goteham,

Hearing your Grace would come this way,
Did thinke it good for you to ſtay,
But hear you, neighbours, bid ſomebody ring the bels,
And we are come to you alone to deliuer our petition,

Kin. What is it Perin, I pray thee reade.

per. Nothing but to haue a licenſe to brew ſtrong Ale thriſe a week, and he that comes to Goteham, and will not ſpende a penie on a pot of Ale, if he be a drie, that he may faſt.

Kin. Well ſirs, we grant your petition.

Cob. We humblie thanke your royall Maieſty.

King. Come Dunſton, lets away. Exeunt omnes.

Enter Ethenwald alone.

Eth. Ethenwald, be aduiſed, the King hath ſent to thee,
Nay, more, he means to come and viſite thee,
But why. I there's the queſtion:
Why tis for this, to ſee if he can fynd,
A front whereon to graft a paire of hornes:
But in plain tearms, he comes to Cuckold me,
And for he means to doe it without ſuſpect,
He ſends me word he means to viſite me:
The King is amorous, and my wife is kinde,
So kind (I feare) that ſhe wil quickly yeeld
To any motion that the king ſhal make:
Eſpecially if the motion be of loue:
For Pliny writes, women are made lyke wax,
Apt to receiue any impreſſion:
Whoſe mindes are lyke the Janamyſt,
That eates, yet cries, and neuer is ſatisfied:
Well, be as it is, for Ile be ſure of this,
It ſhall be no waies preiudice to me:
For I will ſet a ſkreene before the fyre,
And ſo preuent what otherwyſe would enſue:
Twere good I queſtioned with my father firſt,
To heare how he affected towards the King.
What ho.

Enter Oſrick and Alfrida.

Oſr. Ethenwald, my ſonne, what newes?

Ethen. Why aske you? I am sure you haue heard the newes.
Ofr. Not yet, I promyse you my Lord. (visit you.
Ethen. Why then tis thus, the King doth meane to come and
Ofr. And welcome shal his Maiesty be to me,
That in the wane of my decreasing yeares,
Vouchsafes this honour to Earle Ofricks house.
Ethen. So then, you meane to entertaine him well?
Ofr. What els my Sonne?
Eth. Nay, as you will, but heare you wyfe, what do you think in this, that Edgar means to come and be your guest?
Alfr. I thinke my Lord he shall be welcom then,
And I hope that you will entertaine him so:
That he may know how Ofrick honours him:
And I will be attyred in cloth of Bis,
Beset with Orient pearle, fetcht from rich Indian
And all my chamber shall be richly,
With Aras hanging, fetcht from Alexandria,
Then will I haue rich Counterpoints and muske,
Calamon, and Casia, sweet smelling Amber Greece,
That he may say, Venus is come from heauen.
And left the Gods to marie Ethenwald.
Eth. Zwounds, they are both agreed to cuckold me,
But heare you wyfe, while I am master of the Bark,
I meane to keepe the helmster in my hand:
My meaning is, you shall be rulde by me,
In being disguised till the King be gone,
And thus it shall be, for I will haue it so.
The King hath neuer seene thee I am sure,
Nor shall he see thee now, if I can chuse:
For thou shalt be attyrde in some base weedes,
And Kate the kitchin maid shall put on thine:
For being richly tyred, as she shall be,
She will serue the turne to keep him companie.
Ofr. Why, men that heare of this will make a scorne of you.
Eth. And he that lies with this wil make a horne for me.
It is ynough, it must be so,

Alf. Me thinks twere better otherwaies. Exit Alfrida
Ethenw. I think not so, will you be gone?
Father, let me alone, Ile breake her of her will,
We that are maried to yong wiues, you see,
Must haue a speciall care vnto their honestie:
For should we suffer them to haue their will:
They are apt (you know) to fall to any ill.
But here comes the King.

Enter the King, Dunston, and Perin to Ethenwald.

Ki. Earle Osricke, you must needs hold vs excused,
Though boldly thus vnbid we visite you:
But knowe the cause that mooued vs leaue our Court,
Was to doe honour to Earle Ethenwald:
And see his louelie Bride, faire Alfrida.
Osrick. My gratious Lord, as welcome shall you be,
To me, my Daughter, and my sonne in Law,
As Titus was vnto the Roman Senators,
When he had made a conquest on the Goths:
That in requitall of his seruice done,
Did offer him the imperiall Diademe:
As they in Titus, we in your Grace still syne,
The perfect figure of a Princelie mind.
King Thankes Osrick, but I thinke I am not welcome,
Because I cannot see faire Alfrida:
Osricke, I will not stay, nor eat with thee,
Till I haue seene the Earle of Cornwels wife.
Ethen. If it please your Maiestie to stay with vs,
My wyfe shal wayt as handmaid on your Maiestie:
And in her dutie shew her husbands loue:
And in good tyme, my Lord, see where she comes:

Enter the kitchin maid in Alfridas apparel.

Alfrida, you must leaue your kitchin tricks,
And vse no words but princelie Maiestie.
Maid. Now Iesus blesse your honourable Grace,
Come I pray, sit down, you are welcome by my troth,
As God saue me heres neuer a napkin, fie, fie.

Come

Come on, I pray eat some plums, they be sugar,
Heres good drinke by Ladie, why do you not eate? (eat.
Ki. Nay, pray thee eat Alfrida, it is ynough for me to see thee
Maid. I thank you hartily: by my troth heres neuer a cushen
By my troth Ile knock you anon, go to.
Per. My Lord, this is not Alfrida, this is the kitchin maid,
Kin. Peace Perin, I haue found their subtiltie,
Ethenwald, I pray thee let me see thy kitchin Maid,
Me thinks it is a pretie homely Wench:
I promise thee, Ethenwald, I like her well.
Eth. My Lord, she is a homelie kitchin maid,
And one whose bringing vp hath bene but rude:
And far vnfit for Edgars companie:
But if your Grace want merrie companie,
I will send for Ladies wise and curteous.
To be associates with your Maiestie.
Or if your Grace will haue Musitians sent for,
I will fetch your Grace the best in all this land.
Kin. Ethenwald, no, I will haue the kitchin maid,
And therefore, if you loue me, send for her.
For till she come I cannot be content.
Eth. Father, I wil not fetch her: zwouns, see where she comes
Enter Alfrida in the kitchin maids attyre.
Alfrida. Successful fortune and his hearts content,
Daily attend the person of the King.
And Edgar know that I am Alfrida, daughter to Osrick,
And lately made the Earle of Cornwals wyfe.
King. Why, is not this Alfrida?
Alf. No, my good Lord, it is the kitchin maid,
Whom Ethenwald in too much loue to me,
Hath thus attyred to dallie with the King. (and by.
Maid. By my troth (my Lord) she lies, go to, Ile course you by
Kin. Away (base strumpet) get the from my sight.
Mai. Go your waies, you are a cogging knaue I warrant you.
Kin. Base Ethenwald, dissembler thae thou art,
So to dissemble with thy Soueraigne,

And afterward vnder a shewe of loue,
Thou camst to sooth thy leasing to the King,
Meaning by that to make me to conceiue,
That thy intent was iust and honourable:
But see, at last thou hast deceiued thy selfe,
And Edgar hath found out thy subtiltie,
Which to requite, thinke Edgar is thy enemie,
And vowes to be reuenged for this ill.
Go to thy husband beauteous Alfrida,
For Edgar can subdew affects in loue.

Alf. Thanks, gratious King, myrrour of curtesie,
Whose vertuous thoughts bewray thy princely mind
And makes thee famous mongst thy enemies:
For what is he that heares of Edgars name,
And will not yeeld him praise as he deserues.
Nor hath your Grace euer bene praised more,
Or tearm'd more iust in any action,
Than you shall be in conquering your desires,
And yeelding pardon to Earle Ethenwald.

King. Will you be gone? {Alf. & Eth.

Alf. My gratious Lord, I humbly take my leaue. Exeunt

King. How am I wronged, and yet without redresse?

Dunst. Haue patience good my Lord, and call to mind
How you haue liued praised for vertuous gouernment,
You haue subdued iust vnto this day,
And bene reputed wyse in gouernment,
And will you blemish all your honours got,
In being tearmed a foule Adulterer.

King. Dunston, forbeare for I will haue it so,
It bootes thee not to counsaile me in this,
For I haue sworne the death of Ethenwald.
And he shall die, or Edgar will not liue.
Dunston, it is ynough, I am resolued. Exit.

Dun. Nay, if it be so, then Ethenwald shall not die,
And since intreaties can not serue the turne:
I will make make proofe for once what Arte will doe,

Asmoroth

Aſmoroth aſcende, veni Aſmoroth, Aſmororh veni.

Enter the Deuill.

Deuil. What wilt thou?

Dunſton. Tel me what means the King?

Deu. I wil not tell thee.

Dunſt. I charge thee by the eternall liuing God,
That keeps the Prince of darknes bound in chaines,
And by that Sun, that thou wouldſt gladly ſee,
By heauen and earth, and euery liuing thing,
Tel me that which I did demand of thee.

Deu. Then thus, the king doth mean to murther Ethenwald

Dunſt. But where is the king?

Deu. Seeking for Ethenwald.

Dunſton. But Ile preuent him, follow me inuiſible.

Deu. I wil. Exeunt.

Enter the Prieſt.

Prieſt. I haue bene this morning with a friend of mine,
That would borrow a ſmall ſumme of money of me,
But I haue learned the beſt aſſurance a man can haue,
In ſuch a matter is a good pawn of twiſe the valew,
Or bonds ſufficient for fiue times the quantitie.
He is my neere kinſman, I confeſſe, and a Clergie man,
But fiftie ſhillings is money, & though I think I might truſt him
ſimply with it for a tweluemoneth, where hee craues it but for a
moneth, yet ſimply I will not be ſo ſimple:
For I will borrow his gelding to ride to the Terme,
And keep away a iuſt fortnight:
If then he pay me my money, I will deliuer him his horſe,
I wold be loth to loſe my mony, or craue aſſurance of my kinſmã,
But this may be done to trie me, & I meane lykewiſe to try him.
This is plain, though trulie (brethren) ſomthing ſubtill.
But here comes one would faine take my houſe of me.

Neighbor. Sir, I am a poore man, and I wil giue you thirty
ſhillings a yere, if I may haue it you ſhal be ſure of your money.

pr. Trulie brother in Chriſt, I cannot affoord it of the price,
I muſt let my houſe to line, I aſk no gains, but who comes here?

Enter Honestie and a Beggar.

Beg. I beseech you (good maister) for Gods sake, giue one penie to the poore, lame, and blind, good maister giue something.

Priest. Fy vpon thee lazy fellow, art thou not ashamed to beg? Read the blessed saying of S. Paul, which is, thou shalt get thy liuing with the sweat of thy browes, and he that will not labour is not worthie to eat.

Hone. I, but he remembers not where Christ saith, bee that giueth a cup of cold water in my name shall be blessed.

Beg. Alas sir, you see I am old.

priest. But thats no reason you should beg.

Beg. Alas sir, age comming on me, and my sight being gone, I hope sir, you will pardon mee though I beg, and therefore for Gods sake one peny, good master.

priest. Why I tel thee no, for the Spirit doth not moue me thereunto: and in good time, looke in the blessed Prouerb of Salomon, which is, good deeds do not iustify a man, therfore I count it sinne to giue thee any thing.

Hone. See how he can turne and wind the Scripture to his owne vse, but he remembers not where Christ saith,
He that giueth to the poore lendeth vnto the Lord,
And he shal be repaid seuen fold: but the Priest forgets that, or at least wyse he will not remember it.

Beg. Now fie vpon thee, is this the purenes of your religion? God will reward you no doubt for your hard dealing.

priest. Care not thou for that, wel neighbor, if thou wilt haue my house, friend, and brother in Christ, it wil cost you fourtie shillings, tis wel worth it truely, prouided this, I may not stay for my rent, I might haue a great deale more, but I am loth to exact on my brother.

Hon. And yet he wil sell all a poore man hath to his shirt, for one quarters rent.

Neigh. Gods blessing on your heart sir, you made a godly exhortation on Sunday.

priest. I brother, the Spirite did moue me thereunto: Fie vpon vsurie, when a man wil cut his brothers throate for a litle

Lucre,

Lucre, fie vpon it, fie, we are borne one to liue by another, and for a man to let his owne as he may liue, tis allowed by the word of God, but for vsurie and oppression, fie on it, tis vngodlie, but tell me will you haue it?

Neigh. I will giue you, as I haue profered you.

Priest. Trulie I cannot affoord it, I would I could, but I must goe to our exercise of prayer, & after I must goe see a Farm that I should haue. Exeunt.

Enter Dunston and Perin with the King.

Dunst. MOst gratious Prince, vouchsafe to heare me speake,
In that the lawe of kindred prickes me on,
And though I speake contrarie to your mind,
Yet doe I build on hope you will pardon me.
Were I as eloquent as Demosthenes,
Or lyke Isocrates were giuen to Oratorie:
Your Grace no doubt wil think the time well spent,
And I should gaine me commendations:
But for my note is tuned contrary, (uerie.
I must intreat your Grace to pardon me, if I do iar in my deli-

King. Why Dunston, thou hast found vs gratious still,
Nor will we pull our setled loue from thee,
Untill we find thy dealings contrarie:
But if thy parlie be for Ethenwald,
That base dissembler with his soueraigne.
Twere better leaue to speake in his excuse,
Than by excusing him gaine our ill will:
For I am minded like the Salamander stone,
That fir'd with anger, wil not in hast be quencht:
Though wax be soft, & apt to receiue any impression.
Yet will hard mettell take no forme, except you melt the same.
So meane mens minds may moue as they think good,
But Kings iust doomes are irreuocable.

Dunst. Tis not ynough, where lust doth moue the offence.

Kin. Why, Counsellers may not with Kings dispence.

Dun. A Counseller may speake if he see his prince offend.

King. And for his Counsell rue it in the end.

But Dunſton, leaue, you vrge vs ouer far,
We pardon what is paſt, but ſpeake no more
Dunſt. May pardon me, for I wil ſpeak my mind,
Your Grace may call to mind proud Marius fall,
That through his wilfull mind, loſt lyfe and empire,
And Nimrod, that built huge Babylon,
And thought to make a toure to check the cloudes,
Was ſoone diſmaid by vnknowne languages:
For no one knew what any other ſpake,
Which made him to confeſſe, though twere too late,
Hee had made offence in tempting of the Lord.
Remember Dauid, Salomon and the reſt,
Nor had proud Holofernes loſt his head,
Had he not bene a foule Adulterer.
Kin. Dunſton, forbeare, and let this anſwer thee
Thou art too preſumptuous in reproouing me,
For I haue ſworne as trulie as I liue,
That I will neuer pardon Ethenwald.
Dun. Did you but ſee the man, I am aſſurde,
You would not chooſe but pardon Ethenwald.
per. Why Dunſton, you haue ſeene as wel as I,
That Ethenwald hath diſſembled with the King,
My gratious Lord, firſt cut that Traitor downe.
And then will others feare the lyke amyſſe.
Dun. I tell thee perin, were the Earle in place,
Thou wouldſt eat theſe words vttred in his diſgrace.
Veni Aſmoroth, & in good time ſee where he comes.
Here enter Alfrida diſguiſed with the Deuil.
Kin. But tel me Dunſton, is this Alfrida?
Dun. It is my gratious [illegible]rd, & this is Ethēwald
That layes his breaſt wide open to your Grace,
If ſo it pleaſe your Grace to pardon him.
King. Yes, Dunſton, I am well content to pardon him,
Ethenwald ſtand vp, and riſe vp Alfrida,
For Edgar now giues pardon to you both. (get
Dun. Aſmoroth away, My gratious Lord, Dunſton wil not for

This

This vnknowne fauour showne Earle Ethenwald,
For which account my Nephew and my self,
Do yeeld both lyues and goods at your dispose.
King. Thanks Dunston for thy honorable loue,
And thou deseru'st to be a Counsellour,
For he deserues not other to commaund,
That hath no power to maister his desire,
For Locrin being the eldest sonne of Brute,
Did dote so far vpon an Almaine maid,
And was so rauisht with her pleasing sight,
That full seuen yeares he kept her vnder earth,
Euen in the lyfe time of faire Guendolin:
Which made the Cornish men to rise in Armes,
And neuer left till Locrin was slaine:
And now though late, at last I call to minde,
What wretched ends fell to Adulterers.
Dun. And if your Grace cal Abrams tale to mind,
When that Egyptian Pharo craued his wife,
You will no doubt forgiue my Nephewes guilt,
Who by the mery iest he shewed your Grace,
Did saue your Honour and her chastitie.
King. We take it so, and for amends
Ethenwald, giue me thy hande and we are friends,
And loue thy wyfe and liue together long,
For Edgar hath forgot all former wrong.
Eth. Thanks gratious King, and here vpon my knee,
I rest to be disposed as you please:
Kin. Ynough Ethenwald, but who comes here.

Enter Honesty.

Hon. Why, I think I haue taken in hand an endles taske,
To smell a Knaue, tis more than a Dog can doe:
I haue disguised my self of purpose to finde
A couple of Knaues, which are yet behind,
The next Knaue is a Priest, calde John the precise,
That with counterfeit holinesse blinds the peoples eyes,

This is one of them that wil say it is a shame,
For men to swear and blaspheme Gods holie name:
Yet if a make a good Sermon but once in a yeare,
A will be fourtie tymes in a Tauerne making good cheere,
Yet in the Church he will read with such sobrietie,
That you would thinke him verie precise, and of great honesty.

Kin. What Honesty, hast thou dispatcht and found these priuie knaues: (Exit.

Hon. I shal doe anon, I haue them in sent, but I wil be gone.

Enter priest. (exercise,

pr. Good Lord, I praise God I am come from our mornings
Where I haue profited my selfe, and edified my brethren,
In shewing the way to saluation by my doctrine:
And now I am going to the Court to prefer my petition.
I would giue a hundred pound it were graunted:
Tis a thing of nothing, but here comes one of the Court,

Enter Honestie.

God saue you, brother in Christ, are you towards the King.

Honest. I mary am I, what then, why doest thou aske:

priest. Nothing sir, but I would desire you to stand my friend
To get me the Kings hand and seale to this letter:
I would not vse it (sir) to hinder any man for a thousand pound:
For indeed I am a Cleargie man by my profession:
Tis nothing sir, but as you see, to haue the Kings seale,
To carie Tin, Lead, Wool and broad Clothes beyond seas,
For you know (sir) euery man wil mak the most he can of his own
And for my part, I vse it but for a present necessitie.
If you will vndertake to doe it, Ile giue you a hundred pound.

Honesty. I thanke you sir, but I am afraide the King will
hardlie grant it: why, tis an vndoing to the common wealth,
But trulie I will moone the King to hang you Priest yfaith.

May it please you Grace to grant me my petition,
For I offer it your Grace in pure deuotion.

King. O monstrous: Dunston, didst thou euer heare the like,
Now fie vpon thee base villaine, lay hands on him. (King,

Hon. On me: nay, on him: Priest, I gaue your petition to the

And I will speake to him you may be but hanged,
For if you should liue till the King granted your petition,
The verie Rauens would picke out thine eies liuing:
And therefore twere better you were hanged to saue the birds a
King. Now Honesty, hast thou done, is here all: (labour.
Honesty. O no, my Lord, for there are so many behind,
That I am affraide my worke will neuer haue an end:
But I see by the Priests lookes, he lackes company,
Stay a while, my Lord, Ile fetch another presently.
Kin. Fie, Graceleſſe man, hast thou no feare of God,
To withold thee from these lawleſſe motions,
Why, thou shouldst be as Messenger of God,
And hate deceit and wicked auarice:
But thou art one of those whome God doth hate,
And thy vilde deedes will witneſſe gainst thy soule:
And make the most abominable in his sight,
That made thee (wretch) but to a better end,
Then thus to wrong his sacred Deitie.
Now fie vpon thee monster of a man,
That for to gaine thy selfe a priuate gaine,
Wouldst seeke the vndooing of a common wealth.
And though thou bid ten thousand torments here
They cannot quit thee where thou shalt appeare.
Honest. A Prize, though it be long, I haue found him at last,
But I could not bring him with me,
And therefore I pind a paper on his shoulder,
Meaning thereby to marke him for the gallous:
But hush, here he comes.

Enter Perin. (me

King. What Perin? I cannot think that Perin will be false to
Hon. Why no, for he is false to himself, look in his pocket & see,
This is but a false writ that he hath vsed,
Unknowne to your Maiestie, and leuied great summes of money,
And bribed vpon your poore Commons extreamlie,
How say you my Lord, is this true or no?
King. Honesty, thou sayest true, why, impious wretch,

Ingratefull wretch that thou art to iniure him that alwaies held
Beleeue me Dunston, I durst wel haue swoꝛn, (thee deere,
That Perin had not hatcht so base a thought,
Hon. I, but your Grace sees you are deceiued.
But will your Grace grant me one boone?
King. Whats that Honesty?
Hon. That I may haue the punishing of them,
Whom I haue so laboured to finde.
King. With all my hart Honesty, vse them as thou wilt.
Hon. I thank your Grace: go fetch the other two:
Now to you Cutbert Cutpurse the Conicatcher,
Thy iudgment is to stand at the Market crosse,
And haue thy cursed tongue pind to thy breast,
And there to stand foꝛ men to woonder at:
Til Owles and night-Rauens picke out thy cursed eies.
Conicatch. Good Honestie be moꝛe mercifull.
Hon. You know my mind: O Walter that wold haue moꝛe,
And you shall haue iudgement I meane, which is,
To be caried into a coꝛne field, and thꝛe haue your legs and hands
cut off, because you loued coꝛn so wel, and there rest til the crowes
pick out thine eies. (thereunto,
But now to you that wil do nothing except the spirit moue you
You shall foꝛ abusing the blessed woꝛd of God,
And mocking the diuine oꝛder of Ministery,
Whereby you haue led the ignoꝛant into errours,
You (I say) as you were shamlesse in your shamefull dealing,
Shal to your shame, & the vtter shame of al bad minded men,
That liue as thou hast done,
Stand in Finsburie fields, neere London,
And there (as a dissembling Hypocrit) be shot to death.
priest. Good Honesty, be moꝛe fauourable than so.
Hon. Trulie no, the spirit doth not moue me therunto,
But who is nert, what Perin, a Courtier, and a Coloner to,
I haue a iudgment yet in stoꝛe foꝛ thee,
And foꝛ because I will vse thee fauourablie,
Yfaith thy iudgment is to be but hanged,

But

But where? euen at Tyborne in a good two-peny halter,
And though you could neuer abide the seas, (sheet,
Yet now against your wil, you must bear your saile, namely your
And in a cart be towde vp Holburne hill,
Would all men liuing lyke these in this land,
Might be iudged so at Honesties hand.
Kin. Well Honestie come follow vs to Court,
Where thou shalt be rewarded for thy paine. (lucres sake
Hon. I thank your Grace: you that wil damne your selues for
And make no conscience to deceiue the poore:
You that be enemies of the common wealth:
To send come ouer to inrich the enemie:
And you that doe abuse the word of God,
And send ouer woolle and Tin, broad cloath and lead,
And you that counterfeyt Kings priuie seales,
And thereby rob the willing minded Commmaltie,
I warne you all that vse such subtill villanie,
Beware least you lyke these be found by Honestie,
Take heed I say, for if I catch you once,
Your bodies shall be meat for Crowes,
And the Deuill shall haue your bones,
And thus though long at last we make an end,
Desiring you to pardon whats amisse,
And way the worke, though it be grossly pend,
Laugh at the faults, and weigh it as it is,
And Honestie wil pray vpon his knee,
God cut then off that wrong the Prince or Commmnaltie:
And may her dayes of blesse neuer haue end,
Vpon whose lyfe so many lyues depend. Finis.

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